

Say it Forward

You got the coat! Now get ready to meet patients and have experiences you will never forget. It will shape you into an amazing doc. Soak it up! Cheers and congrats!

– Marissa Mendez, M.D.'15

As you can see I am at the end of my career and you are just beginning! I have found medicine to be very rich and fulfilling for me. My patients have formed who I am. They have challenged me to look at life differently and they have inspired me. I wish you the same experience. It's a wonderful gift to be able to serve others! All the best to you and enjoy UVM!

– Ann Marie Lemire, M.D.'81

What a crazy time to enter the medical field...COVID-19 has challenged us and isolated us. You will work hard...that is in your DNA...My advice to you is to take care of your soul...be true to it, follow it, and nurture it. Take time to love, laugh, feel the sun on your face. When you do this, you will be whole and as such, the best physician!

– Paige Terrien Church, M.D.'99

I am so excited for you today! I remember my first white coat – it held all my hopes and dreams, all my aspirations and plans! Hold this moment dear – you will long remember it.

– Kelly McQueen, M.D.'91

For every note, I write 'Do what they say can't be done.' I'd like to encourage young men and women to make their dreams come true, do things that were not possible, make a difference in their lives, and change the world for the next generation.

– Thuan Nguyen, M.D.'02



A Chance Meeting

I was honored to be asked to write a white coat note as my own White Coat Ceremony was an especially meaningful celebration. I had struggled during the medical school application process and, after two demoralizing rejection cycles over four years, UVM finally took a chance on me and granted me an acceptance. The white coat ceremony was so special; I still remember reading the Hippocratic oath, fighting back tears, in disbelief that I was on my way to becoming a physician, a goal that seemed intangible just one year prior. So, writing white coat notes to first year medical students was a small way to relive my wonderful experience. By chance, in 2019, I met the recipient of one of my first white coat notes at a national conference (the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Annual Meeting) in Chicago! A fourth-year med student at the time, Alejandra told me that she had held onto my note for the past few years and still kept it with her, which meant the world to me.

– CORDELIA ROSS, M.D.'16

Students and Alums Connect Through White Coat Notes

For the past seven years, every new medical student at the Larner College of Medicine has had something special waiting for them in the pocket of the new white coat they receive during their White Coat Ceremony, one of the most momentous days in their journey to becoming a doctor. Alumni from across the class years volunteer to write a short note of encouragement to the College's newest students,

often sharing wisdom gleaned from their own time at the College or tips to make the most of their medical school experience. When students leave the ceremony with their white coat, the note serves as a reminder of the network of support they have as they join the Larner family. Every year, relationships blossom from these notes, as alums and students make meaningful connections and stay in touch.



A Time of Beginning

The White Coat Ceremony is one of the more meaningful rituals we perform in medicine. This mere hope and dream of entering medical school becomes a reality! I've enjoyed writing to students, knowing that my note will be sitting in a pocket of their new white coat, waiting for them to read. I imagine this note being read in the beautiful and airy Ira Allen Chapel, and as this student contemplates their new role they are taking on in the world, well...maybe something I write will inspire them that day. Or possibly something I write will be recalled when difficult times arise when working on the floors or studying for STEP 1. For me, writing these notes reminds me of what a treasure medical school was. The friendships I made and still have, the faculty, and the beautiful setting of Burlington, Vermont. This white coat note project has been a great way for alumni like me to stay involved and close to the UVM culture of community.

– BEN BROWN, M.D.'15



A Meaningful Message

When I was first contacted about writing a note for a first-year medical student I thought it was a great idea. The student receives a message from someone who has been in their shoes in the past and since has completed med school, post-grad training, launched into practice and even retirement with its seasoned reflections. And how special for me, a grateful graduate, to have the opportunity to encapsulate a meaningful message to a first-year med student, affirming their potential and reducing their anxiety. One follow-up truly touched my heart. At a College function probably five years after that white coat note connection, a resident at UVM Medical Center came over to me and introduced himself. He shared with me that as a first-year med student he had tacked his note from me on his bulletin board and from time to time through med school and into residency, he reread it and found it helpful. How meaningful that is!

– MIMI REARDON, M.D.'67